



WASHINGTON LEGISLATORS

Back to School

The Mindwalk

I woke up today to the sound of my clock radio (1)— 6:00 am. (2) As I made my bed, I laughed at the tag attached to my mattress: “Do not remove under penalty of law.” (3) Ha! How ridiculous— police in my bedroom!

I couldn’t decide what to wear (4) today, remembering that our class was going on a science field trip (5) in the afternoon to take water samples (6) at a river several miles from our school. Should I wear my new or old sneakers? After phoning (7) a friend and reading an email from another, I decided on the old ones.

For breakfast, I drank some orange juice (8) and ate a bowl of Wheaties. (9) Since, I still had some time before the school bus (10) would arrive down the block, I decided to take my dog for a short walk (11) around the corner to the mailbox (12) to mail some letters.

On the way, I stopped at the convenience store to buy something (13) for lunch, since I wouldn’t be eating in the school cafeteria (14) today. At the store, I noticed the new advertisement for the state lottery (15) and wished for a moment that I was old enough (16) to buy a ticket— I knew I could win! I glanced at the headlines of the newspaper: Congress Addresses Health Care Concerns (17) . Then I noticed that the clerk had posted new signs about the penalties for minors (18) who try to purchase cigarettes and alcohol (19).

Yesterday I remember that my science teacher (20) had told our class that the skills we would use in taking water samples would help us on the science exam (21) at the end of the year. Our language arts teacher added that our lab reports would help prepare us for the WASL (22).

I lost track of time so I missed the bus. I had to ask my older brother to take me to school in his car (23) on his way to high school. He said he would take me. So he got a cup of coffee (24) and I got in his car and fastened my seat belt. (25) I glanced at the gas gauge and told him that it might be a good idea to fill up with gas (26) on the way. I couldn’t wait until I would have my driver’s license— (27) just 2 more years— and my own credit (28) card!

The 7:00 am newscast began with a report on the Kyoto Protocol, (29) a treaty requiring nations to limit the amount of greenhouse gasses emitted into the air which President Bush, who won our state’s electoral votes (30) in November, has refused to sign. The news from our state included a report on several crimes (31) committed recently and an update on a high profile trial involving the death penalty (32).

En route to school, we saw the police (33) stop a driver— most likely for speeding, (34) I thought. The man got out of his car and began to use his cell phone (35), probably to tell someone he was going to be late for work! We noticed a number of houses for sale (36). Traffic was slow because workers were repairing the main street (37) on our route to school.

I made it on time to my first period class— social studies. The teacher told us to open our books to the chapter about federalism and asked us to what extent we think law affects our lives. I thought for a minute, raised my hand and said, “Not much— unless I rip the tag off my mattress!”

Suggested Answers

1. FCC, Federal Licensing Laws
2. National Bureau of Standards
3. Federal Consumer Protection Laws
4. Federal Import Controls
5. Local School District Regulations; must conform to State Laws
6. Federal Environmental Laws
7. Federal Communication Licensing Laws
8. Federal Pure Food and Drug Act
9. Federal Pure Food and Drug Act
10. State School Transportation Laws
11. Local leash laws and dog licensing ordinances
12. Federal Postal Laws
13. State and/or local sales tax
14. State School Cafeteria Regulations; Federal School Lunch Program
15. State Lottery Laws
16. Federal Birth Registry
17. (Proposed) federal laws; existing federal laws; state health insurance laws
18. State laws prohibiting sales of tobacco, alcohol to minors
19. Federal Excise Taxes
20. State Teacher Licensing Laws
21. Local school district policy
22. State testing requirements
23. State Motor Vehicle laws
24. Federal Import Controls
25. State Motor Vehicle laws
26. Federal and State Gas taxes
27. State Motor Vehicle laws
28. State, Federal Contract law
29. Federal laws (debate over International Treaty)
30. State Election laws
31. State Criminal Code
32. State Criminal Code
33. State or local driving laws
34. State or local speed limits
35. Proposals re: use of cell phones while driving
36. Federal mortgage laws, state contract laws
37. State and/or federal highway funds.